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DATE: September 22, 2008  
TO: Ms. Wendy Rickman, Service Area Manager  
Iowa Department of Human Services – Des Moines Service Area  
CC: Iowa Department of Human Services  
Community Partners  
Youth Emergency Services & Shelter (YESS) Board of Directors  
FROM: Stephen B. Quirk, Executive Director- YESS  
YESS Management Team  
SUBJECT: YESS Access Center Executive Summary

Greetings-

Please review the following pages of this Executive Summary as they provide a creative and innovative proposal responding to and addressing the language identified in Senate File 2425\*. The YESS Access Center will address the intentions of the legislative language and more importantly provide a meaningful service to youth. YESS is willing to demonstrate a leadership role in the community as we work collectively to advance emergency services.

On behalf of the Management Team at YESS- we are pleased to provide this proposal for your review and reaction by our partners in the community. We are convinced that this project will appropriately react to Senate File 2425 and the intentions of the Senate. We are more confident that this project- in conjunction with a motivated, responsive and proactive system of community providers will address the real needs of youth in our community.

The following sections provide a summary explanation and structure to this proposal:

- Program Summary
- Proposed Services
- Implementation & Fiscal Assessment
- Community Engagement
- Community Alignment
- Outcomes: Results Based Accountability

Please share this document with our community partners and your colleagues at the Department of Human Services. We will look forward to any feedback, encouragement and suggestions for improvement. Our agency is excited to provide leadership in the youth and juvenile justice arena and we have great confidence in our ability to provide innovative emergency services in the community.

\* Senate File 2425 (excerpted): "The department shall work with the coalition for children and family services in Iowa and other representatives of shelter care providers to reduce the number of guaranteed shelter beds and shift a portion of available funding to develop new or expand existing child welfare emergency services for children who might otherwise be served in shelter care. The child welfare emergency services shall be provided by shelter care agencies that currently have a contract for shelter care services with the department and may include mobile crisis response unites for child and family crises, in-home supervision services, emergency family foster care homes, expanding capacity to provide emergency services in other family foster care homes, or provide flexible funding for child welfare emergency services based on evidence-based practices."

*Healing Families. Changing Lives. Every Day.*

**Project Proposal: Creative Solution to SF2425**  
**DRAFT for Community Consideration: September - 2008**

**Program Name:** YESS Access Center

**Program Summary:** The YESS Access Center will provide an array of emergency assessment, crisis intervention and mediation services designed to meet the needs of young people (from birth through age 17) and their families who are experiencing an extreme crisis in their lives. A continuum of emergency services designed to thoroughly assess the needs of families and their children is critical to our community. Effective assessment and intervention services for young people who are at risk of becoming system involved can reduce family stress, help to prevent the likelihood of child abuse and decrease the need for higher levels of intervention by helping the family to identify informal supports that may very well meet their needs when home is not an option.

**Proposed Services:** The following summarizes the array of emergency services that will be available 24-hours a day, seven days a week, to meet the safety and well-being needs of young people who are currently involved or at risk of becoming involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.

- **A 24-hour crisis line would be utilized to gain initial information.** [During the crisis call, YESS staff will complete an initial assessment of the situation and determine the caller's immediate needs. If the needs of the caller are met during the crisis call, there will be no further service. If the caller needs further assistance, crisis assessment and intervention services will begin.]
- **Crisis assessment and intervention services will consider the immediate safety needs in the situation and begin to determine an appropriate course of action.** [The primary focus of service is to build rapport and begin to de-escalate the immediate situation. Services can occur during the initial crisis call or may be arranged to transpire at YESS.]
- **Crisis mediation services will be utilized to stabilize the young person and their family.** [This level of service is designed to explore and develop strategies that will address the immediate needs of the family while ensuring the safety of everyone involved. YESS staff will help the family to identify viable informal supports and community resources that may meet their immediate needs.]
- **Crisis planning – every family who has a face-to-face mediation will develop a crisis plan to ensure on-going safety and stabilization.** [The development of the crisis plan will begin during initial contact and will become the foundation for service delivery. The plan will build on the family's strengths, will identify critical issues that need to be addressed, identify the appropriate level of services or referrals that will meet the family's needs and determine a viable plan of action.]
- **Emergency crisis and respite care are short-term placements (less than 24 hours) in a residential setting.** [This would be utilized when home is not an option and other safe alternatives are not available. These services could be utilized to maintain foster care placements by reducing stress, providing support and giving those system involved caregivers a much needed break.]

**YESS Access Center – Implementation & Fiscal Assessment**

In order to implement the Access Center to meet the identified needs for emergency services in our community, YESS proposes to begin operations effective November 1, 2008. Emergency services will continue to be available from YESS 24-hours a day, seven days a week. From historic data, YESS has identified 8:00 am to 10:00pm as representing when the majority of services through the Access Center may be needed. As a result, the Access Center will be staffed with employees whose primary responsibilities during these times are to provide Access Center services. During overnight hours, staff would be available to provide a more limited scope of service with primary emphasis on stabilization and safety for children and youth. The agency remains a facility that is open and able to deliver services all day- everyday.

The total cost of providing emergency services for system involved youth through the Access Center is projected to be \$122,192 for the eight months remaining in the fiscal year. These expenses include personnel costs, direct Center operational costs, and indirect management, oversight, and support services. In order to

financially support the Access Center, YESS would reduce our daily guaranteed shelter beds to 20, resulting in a funding shift of \$44,949 in revenue from the Department of Human Services. In addition, YESS would propose to continue the excess county billing for the daily reduction of two beds resulting in \$22,703 in revenue for the Access Center. Because many of the expenses associated with the Access Center are being shifted from existing agency budget line items, general agency revenues totaling \$45,338 may be utilized toward the cost of the Access Center. Community support for system involved youth for the Access Center will be sought for the remaining \$9,202 in expenses. Additional resources identified through grants and private philanthropy will be utilized to enhance services and supplement operations expenses. ***Revenues and expenses for the YESS Access Center are based on initial utilization estimates and are subject to change.***

## **Community Engagement**

During broad community meetings (August 21<sup>st</sup> & September 4<sup>th</sup>) facilitated by the Des Moines Service Area of the Iowa Department of Human Services, YESS provided leadership to advancing a creative proposal to provider emergency services. The following organizations had representatives at one or both of these meetings:

- Children & Families of Iowa
- Coalition for Children & Family Services of Iowa
- Community Members
- Decategorization within the Service Area
- Des Moines Police Department
- Greater Des Moines Community Foundation
- Iowa Department of Human Services
- Iowa Department of Human Services- Des Moines Service Area
- Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
- Iowa Kids Net
- Juvenile Court Services
- Orchard Place – Child Guidance Center
- Polk County – Community, Family and Youth Services
- South Central Youth and Family Services
- United Way of Central Iowa
- Youth Emergency Services & Shelter

Each meeting provided an environment for productive discussion and facilitated interaction. YESS Management Team leaders were engaged with collective discussions and also reached out to community members for specific creative thinking around unique relationships with agencies and how they would engage, utilize and ultimately support the Access Center.

## **Community Alignment**

YESS will continually strive to build positive working relationships and obtain information about community resources that are available to families. We will work in collaboration with many organizations that share a goal of providing high quality services to youth. Memorandums of Understanding, contracts and other appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure that referrals can occur seamlessly through available community resources. The following organizations have been identified as critical partners and contractors in service delivery for a Community Access Center.

- Other Shelter Providers in the Des Moines Service Area
  - Polk County Youth and Family Services
  - South Central Youth and Family Services

- Department of Human Services Safety and Permanency contract holders
  - Children & Families of Iowa
  - Mid-Iowa Family Therapy
- Department of Human Services Foster Care Recruitment and Retention contract holder
  - Four Oaks
- Hospitals
  - Broadlawns Medical Center
  - Iowa Health- Des Moines (Lutheran, Methodist & Blank)
  - Mercy Hospital
- Substance Abuse Providers
  - Children & Families of Iowa
  - Employee & Family Resources
- Mental Health Providers
  - Orchard Place – Child Guidance
  - Wadle & Associates

In order to maximize our efforts to sufficiently promote and offer Access Center capacity, YESS will focus a great deal of time and energy in promoting this service to the community, youth partners, families and youth. The following agencies and community partners would be identified to receive focused training and education.

- Decat Staff
- Department of Human Services staff
- Empowerment Coordinators
- Juvenile Court Officer staff
- Juvenile Court Judges
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Metro Schools

The following existing organizations and committees have been identified to serve as resources and actively promote the Access Center:

- Decat Governance Board
- Decat Providers Advisory
- Empowerment Areas/Boards/Committee
- Model Court
- Polk Partners for Families
- Youth Development Cluster
- Zero to Three

## Summary

The preceding pages identify the areas of focus of the Access Center. A complete and thorough Business Plan has been developed that further provides strategy around: Policies & Procedures; Staffing Models; Additional Staff Training; Program Marketing & Promotion; Facilities Management; and Fiscal Analysis. All aspects of the Access Center services are designed to provide highest quality programming to youth and families in our community.

The following page represents an eight month Results Based Accountability outcomes model, with baseline date determined from previous year's utilization.

**Results Based Accountability  
YESS Access Center (8 months)  
DRAFT for Consideration & Community Review**

<u>What We Will Do</u>	<u>How Well We Will Do It</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a crisis line that will be available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Crisis line will respond to an estimated 1,665 calls.</li> <li>2. Provide crisis assessment and intervention services to approximately 800 families for this time period. Administer screening tools to identify family/child needs and follow-through with necessary referrals.</li> <li>3. Provide 665 crisis mediation sessions with young people and their families in order to stabilize the immediate situation (200 will be system involved).</li> <li>4. Provide 2,900 hours of crisis stabilization to system involved young people when no other immediate, appropriate housing options are available. Services provided are less than 24 hours.</li> <li>5. Provide parent and youth satisfaction surveys at conclusion of services.</li> <li>6. Administer aftercare follow-up surveys to parents between 30 and 90 days after youth is discharged from services.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide 100% of the staff with on the job training.</li> <li>2. Maintain staffing patterns to ensure appropriate coverage and the ability to conduct assessment services 24 hours per day, seven days per week.</li> <li>3. Maintain 1:5 staff/client ratio in order to provide services that respond to individual client needs.</li> <li>4. YESS will meet or exceed the state licensing and contractual expectations for services provided.</li> <li>5. 90.0% of the youth and 90.0% of parents who complete the satisfaction survey will rate YESS services as satisfactory or above in all areas.</li> </ol>
<u>Will Anyone Be Better Off?</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Improve access to community resources:</u> 665 families and their children will increase their knowledge of and ability to access appropriate resources. 565 of those families will be referred to appropriate services within the community.</li> <li>2. <u>665 families and their children will have access to the right level of care to meet their immediate needs:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis Mediation will assist 330 families/young people to identify alternative placements that will safely meet their immediate needs.</li> <li>• Crisis Stabilization will provide a short-term safe environment for 330 young people when other alternatives are not immediately available.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <u>Divert young people from entering the child welfare or juvenile justice system.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of the 165 youth brought to the Access Center via Law Enforcement 143 will receive services that will divert system involvement and reunify the family.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. <u>Reduce the length of stay in shelter for system involved young people</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer 200 system involved young people for a Family Team Meeting as a result of entering shelter care.</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. <u>Decrease the number of placements for system involved young people.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce familial stress by providing 2,900 hours of crisis stabilization services to system involved young people.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 85% of the families and children served will demonstrate their increased knowledge of community resources by accessing appropriate services when available.</li> <li>2. 85% of the families and children who participate in crisis assessment and intervention services will have access to the level of care that meet their immediate needs.</li> <li>3. 85% of the youth brought to the Access Center by Law Enforcement will be diverted from system involvement and reunified with their family.</li> <li>4. 100% of the system involved young people entering shelter will be referred for a Family Team Meeting. 85% of the Family Team Meetings will result in the development of a viable plan to meet the safety and well-being needs of the young person.</li> <li>5. 90 % of the caregivers of system involved children will report a decrease in stress as a result of receiving timely crisis stabilization services.</li> </ol>